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Farm Broadcasters Letter



Letter No. 2246

January 23, 1986

CORN TO
USSR

On Jan. 22 private exporters reported to the U.S. Department of Agriculture export sales of 100,000 metric tons of corn for delivery to the USSR during the 1985-86 marketing year and under the third year of the Long Term Grain Supply Agreement. Sales of wheat and corn for the USSR for delivery during the third year of the agreement now total 6,274,000 tons, of which wheat is 152,600 tons and corn is 6,121,400 tons. Sales of soybeans total 200,000 tons.

12 BILLION
POUNDS OF MILK

The milk production during Dec. 1985 totaled 12 billion pounds, a record high for Dec. and 9 pct. above Dec. 1984, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The accumulated milk production for the year 1985 totaled 143 billion pounds, 6 pct. more than produced in 1984. On New Year's Day each milk cow ate an average 16.6 pounds of grain and other concentrates. The average cost was \$7.23 per hundredweight.

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RESERVE
NOT A
SOIL BANK

CURRENT SOIL RECORDS

Under the Conservation Reserve Program, only the most highly erodible lands in the nation will be retired, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The Program differs from the Soil Bank of the 1950's, which was intended mainly to adjust supply to demand by taking any type of land out of production. There was no attempt to limit the lands enrolled to highly erodible or otherwise fragile acres, and conservation practices were only secondary purposes. The Conservation Reserve will reduce onsite and offsite damage from soil erosion more sharply than the Soil Bank.

WHEAT
SEEDINGS
& PRODUCTION

Areas seeded for the 1986 winter wheat crop is estimated by the U.S. Department of Agriculture at 54 million acres, 7 pct. less than the 57.8 million acres seeded for 1985. All wheat production in 1985 totaled 2.42 billion bushels, 7 pct. less than in 1984. Area harvested for grain, at 64.7 million acres, is down 3 pct. Yields averaged 37.5 bushels per acre, down 1.3 bushels from last year.

BARLEY
PRODUCTION

The production of barley in 1985 is estimated by the U.S. Department of Agriculture at 589 million bushels, down 2 pct. from last year's record high production. The average yield per acre is 51 bushels, down 2.4 bushels from 1984.

BENEFITS OF
THE CONSERVATION
RESERVE PROGRAM

Important environmental benefits are expected by the U.S. Department of Agriculture as a result of a 40-million-acre Conservation Reserve. These include some 750 million tons of soil erosion per year that will not occur...Improved water quality due to an annual reduction of 211 million tons of sediment reaching streams and other surface waters...Reduction in pesticide use by about 60 million pounds...Better quality habitat for fish and wildlife...And trees on 4 to 5 million more acres.

THERE'S NOT AN
AWFUL LOT OF
COFFEE IN BRAZIL

The world green coffee production for 1985/86 is estimated at 98.6 million 60-kilogram bags, 9 pct. more than the previous season, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. World coffee supplies are adequate to meet global consumption requirements through the current marketing year. But a severe drought in the major coffee growing areas of southern Brazil could significantly reduce Brazilian coffee production and export potential in 1986/87. There is a growing concern that the drought also affected the 1987/88 crop prospects and that the trees, in their weakened state, could be further damaged if a frost occurs in mid-1986.

COTTON
PRODUCTION
& CONSUMPTION

U.S. cotton production was reduced by the U.S. Department of Agriculture to 13.5 million bales. Cotton exports for the first quarter of 1985/86 totaled 625,700 bales, 41 pct. below the first quarter of last season. The total 1985/86 export forecast was reduced to 2.8 million bales. The world cotton consumption for 1985/86 is estimated at 72.1 million bales. The world cotton production for 1985/86 is estimated at 81.4 million bales.

IRRIGATION
PUMPING

U.S. farmers increased onfarm pump irrigation by 27 pct. from 1974 to 1983, adding 9.5 million pump-irrigated acres, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Farmers irrigated 44.6 million acres in 1983 with onfarm pumps, and pump energy accounted for 23 pct. of the total energy used on the farm for crop production. Electricity was the predominant energy source for irrigation pumps, followed by natural gas, diesel, liquefied petroleum gas, and gasoline. The cost of energy for onfarm pump irrigation nearly quadrupled, rising from \$551 million to nearly \$2 billion between 1974 and 1980, then increased another \$500 million between 1980 and 1983.

BETTER THAN
THE NOSE TEST

Ground beef sold in bulk can now be tested by buyers for restaurants, supermarket chains and the military to quickly estimate how long hamburger will stay fresh. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, ground beef's freshness is determined by measuring lactic acid in the meat. High levels of the acid indicate the beef will spoil quickly and have a bad odor. Testing is done in one hour using high-performance liquid chromatography that is available at commercial laboratories. (For details, call A. Douglas King, ARS, USDA, Albany, Calif. - 415/486-3252.)

FROM OUR
TELEVISION
SERVICE

WORLD SUPPLY AND DEMAND ESTIMATES...Wet weather in Argentina and drought in Brazil are affecting a number of commodities in global trade. USDA economist James Cole examines the world supply and demand estimates and how they're affecting our trade situations. Vic Powell interviews. (106)

SOVIET GRAIN SITUATION...The Soviet Union has experienced some unusual temperatures in the past months. USDA analyst Keith Severin focuses on how these temperatures have affected Soviet crops and what this means for U.S. exports. Vic Powell interviews. (107)

WORLD OILSEED SITUATION...The January forecast for 1985/86 world oilseed production is 194.1 million tons - 2.6 million below last months forecast but 6.2 million above the 1984/85 level. USDA analyst Rich McDonnell takes a look at the world oilseed situation and how it affects U.S. exports. DeBoria Janifer interviews. (108)

TECHNOLOGY - TREADMILL OF AGRICULTURE...New technologies keep U.S. farming competitive but do not necessarily improve financial conditions in agriculture. USDA economist Lloyd Teigen describes how the impact of technological change brings about structural changes as well. DeBoria Janifer interviews. (109)

PHOTODYNAMIC HERBICIDES...Constantin Rebeiz, University of Illinois, describes the importance of photodynamic herbicides in agriculture and talks about research to study these herbicides. Gary Beaumont interviews. (110)

FROM OUR RADIO
SERVICE

AGRICULTURE USA #1495...(Weekly 13½ min documentary) Experts are predicting another hectic and unusually difficult spring lending season. This year, however, there are some new factors in the farm debt situation. These include the new farm bill and farm credit aid package. Gary Crawford presents a lending season overview.

AGRITAPE/FARM PROGRAM REPORT #1484...(Weekly reel of news features) USDA news highlights; Future insecticides; A new soybean product?; New technology--Blessing or curse?

CONSUMER TIME #977...(Weekly reel of five 2½-3 min features) Coffee prices percolating; A nice warm house; Good tasting veggies; Herb seasonings; New cancer treatment.

USDA RADIO NEWS SERVICE...Fri, Jan. 31, Ag. prices; Tues, Feb. 4, Crop and weather update, also scheduled release of USDA's fiscal '87 budget figures (possible press conference); Wed, Feb. 5, Ag. resources outlook; Mon, Feb. 10, U.S. and World crop production reports, Soviet grain outlook, World ag. supply and demand sit., U.S. grain stocks report. Dial the USDA National News Line 202-488-8358 or 8359. All material changed at 5 p.m. EST each working day.

OFF MIKE

Terry Patilla is the farm director at Alabama Farm Network, Montgomery, AL (which incidentally is the new name. It used to be Capitol Agri-Net). He replaced Clay Redden who is now in the news department at WACV, also Montgomery. Lee Morgan is the farm director there, and he says Clay helps him out from time to time ... Mike Galm moved from KCAU-TV, Sioux City, IA, to KWSL/KGLI, same city, as farm director the first of the year. KCAU-TV has not replaced him and agriculture news is being handled as part of general news assignments ... Del Fisher, who was with Great American Ag Net at Fargo, ND, is now working at KOVC, Valley City, ND. Clay Peterson, who was with the network headquartered at Pierre, SD, is still with the network but moved to Fargo to take Del's place ... Ron Bahe ("Pronounce it like the 'e' wasn't there," Ron says) is the farm director at KMMJ, Grand Island, NB. He replaced Pat McAfee. We understand she left broadcasting ... We talked briefly with John Weir (KBUR, Burlington, IA) about how Cletus Paull is doing. As you may remember, Cletus fell and broke his hip at the NAFB meeting in Kansas City last fall. John said he was coming along great, but unfortunately fell over the holidays and now is wearing a neck brace, too ... Reflecting back on the NAFB fall meeting in another way, we've been meaning to report on an incident at one of the meal events. Forrest Bradley, who is editor of the MidAm Reporter, and his wife were at our table. It only took Forrest a moment to realize something was missing, and he promptly took care of the situation. He ordered milk for everyone, not just a glass but pitchers full. After all, wouldn't you if you were editor of MidAm Reporter?

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